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F2Y664UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
*Extension Service*, WASHINGTON 25, D.C.

## VICTORY FARM VOLUNTEERS

August 14, 1947

For your information

TO ALL ASSISTANT STATE FARM LABOR SUPERVISORS, VFV:

Subject: News Letter

The end of Extension's responsibility for the farm labor program is in sight. According to reports, a lot of youth will be working in the fields and orchards during the next month or two. We of VFV will want to give heed to the suggestion of Meredith C. Wilson contained in a letter he sent to the States recently: "Extra effort may need to be put forth to insure completion of the farm labor assignment on the high level of accomplishment which has characterized the Extension Farm Labor Program to date."

## BAD SPRING-GOOD JULY

Everett Ritland's report from Iowa sounds like the newspaper headlines-- pretty black. But there seems to be a bright side to the corn picture and Mr. Ritland indicates that since July 1 "A real comeback has been made and it now appears that the corn, though down 25 percent or so, will be nearly normal in the uplands." And, adds Ritland, they are getting under way with a heavy detasseling recruitment campaign.

And so despite "the worst spring within the memory of the oldest residents of Iowa this year," they're expecting 90,000 acres of hybrid corn in the State and think 30,000 youth workers will be needed.

## "WORD FROM WASHINGTON"

The American School Board Journal is a periodical which goes out to school administrators throughout the country.

In the magazine, Miss Elaine Exton usually writes a "Word from Washington" and in the July issue she deals at length on the subject of outdoor activities for youth.

Says she: "Straws in the Washington wind indicate that educators....are becoming increasingly vocal about the contribution of camping and outdoor experiences to the total growth and development of children and youth." She quotes various authorities to prove her point and then devotes several columns to "farm work for city youth." In some detail she gives the story of the Victory Farm Volunteers.

For an up-to-date reference of what others are saying about what the outdoors can teach young people you'll want to look up this article.



## WORD FROM THE NEIGHBORS

College Park, Maryland, may be only a stone's throw from the District of Columbia but we get most of our Maryland news by letter. Paul Nystrom writes us that Maryland is operating one boys' camp in Centerville this year for hybrid corn detasseling. The farm labor association is underwriting all costs except those of recruiting in Baltimore and Washington. School systems in both these cities are cooperating. The camp will have a capacity of 70 to 100 boys, depending on the need.

In the counties near Baltimore and on the upper Eastern Shore, Maryland will also have some live-ins this year.

## DISTRIBUTION IN SWITZERLAND

A letter from the National Council of the Young Women's Christian Association points out that several copies of the VFW news letter and Farm Work for City Youth are being distributed to World's Y.W.C.A. Office in Switzerland. We sent copies for this distribution.

And this reminds us that we've had some unusual comments about Farm Work for City Youth--from State farm labor supervisors, county agents, school people, and various Extension people. We appreciated the letter from those of you who seemed to like this publication.

## FIELD TRIP TIME

It's field trip time for us in the Federal office, and Miss Clark has already left for Michigan, Indiana, and Wisconsin. From these Midwestern States she will take a swing across to western New York to see the day-hauls in Buffalo and Rochester and then hopes to take in the Connecticut tobacco camps before returning to Washington. I've just returned from two trips--one to Kansas, Nebraska, and South Dakota, and one to South Carolina for the peach harvest.

Newell Page, vo-ag teacher in the Pratt, Kansas, high school, who assists W. O. Stark during the wheat harvest, took me on a 500-mile trip through the western part of the State where the fields were yielding the largest crop of wheat in the history of the State. We learned that with the surplus of labor youth have little opportunity to get work. Boys were looking for work in nearly every county farm labor office where we stopped. Some were successful but most of them were disappointed. Combines are taking the place of human labor, and the self-propelled machine is reducing the need still further because one man on this latest machine takes the place of two. Truckers and others needed to complete the crew are usually brought along by the combine operator. Only chance for other work is with the farmer who combines his own grain. The boys who did farm work were well paid. One high school lad we ran across had worked 32 days and put in 500 hours at a dollar an hour. The story is different in eastern Kansas, where much wheat is harvested with hand labor.

In Nebraska I found J. V. Srb busy conducting training schools for corn detassellers. State Supervisor L. F. Snipes, Director Brokaw, County Agent Kruse, Mrs. Ella Cram, a former Home Agent, Farm Labor Assistant E. R. Christianson, and I attended two of these schools in Dodge County. It's a four-part "course" each conducted by a different member of the staff. After Mr. Kruse explained the purpose of the meeting, Mr. Srb demonstrated how hybrid seed corn is produced, Mr. Christianson took up "workers' responsibilities" bringing in parents' cooperation, and Mrs. Cram "coached" the prospective workers on matters of dress, the importance of having a good breakfast, the contents of the lunch pail, the evening dinners, and the importance of getting to bed in time to get enough sleep



for the next day's work. The growers were well represented at these schools and expressed their appreciation of what Extension is doing in recruiting and training. There'll be 28 such meetings in 12 different counties conducted by Mr. Srb and county personnel. We've never heard of anything like this before.

Zach Wipf's South Dakota VFV program was on in full gear. He has seven farm labor assistants; all of them school men, who serve in as many counties. Alfred Halsted, of Yankton, took me to four of the counties. The cocklebur is the object of attack by armies of boys recruited and supervised by these men. It's a pulling job. Unless this weed is removed a corn crop may be cut in half, so farmers have come to rely heavily on these crews to do the job. Demand exceeds the supply. When harvest starts, the older boys help out there driving tractors and shocking the grain. It's true that during this time the cockleburs are neglected, but they come in for attention again after the harvest.

Each crew is usually small enough--four to eight--so that the boys can be hauled to the fields in cars, thus insuring safe transportation. A number of live-ins have been placed on farms too, and the pay runs from \$45 to \$100 a month with board and room.

#### SOUTH CAROLINA AND PEACHES

They'll tell you in South Carolina that they're going to beat Georgia this year in peach production. When W. L. Brannon took me around to see the harvest in the three counties that supply 70 percent of the Carolinian crop you at least know that his State has a lot of peaches hanging on the trees.

In the grading and packing sheds you'll find a good proportion of the workers to be high school boys and girls recruited through the farm labor program. Picking is done by colored folks. H. M. Case, veteran farm labor assistant in Spartanburg, was doing an especially good job. Registered workers are assigned to specific farmers, and when the call comes, the workers are notified to meet at a designated time and place. Mr. Case is on hand to see that the youth are properly allocated to the farmers. From then on, arrangements are made from day to day between the farmers and the workers. Another excellent feature is that when girls are brought back to town after dark they must be delivered individually to their homes.

#### NEW YORK AND DAY-HAULS

Again this year New York is operating a youth day-haul project. The project apparently aims to do the same educational job as last year, for the duties of day-haul assistants are to inform farmers of provisions of the laws on youth employment and to help growers in complying with the laws. Thirteen assistants were appointed late in June, and more are being added as seasonal work gets heavier.

#### PUTTING IT BRIEFLY

In Rutland County, Vermont, among the city boy "live-ins" are the Daley twins--Raymond and Thomas. They tip the scales at over 200 pounds each....John Casey, emergency farm labor assistant in Boston, had recruited by early July, 34 youth for New Hampshire, 89 for Vermont, and a couple of others for Massachusetts and Maine. Mr. Casey will spend some of his time this year supervising the boys he recruited...."Back to the Farm With Youth" is the title of a recent news story in a Monmouth County, New Jersey, newspaper.



KEYSTONE VISIT

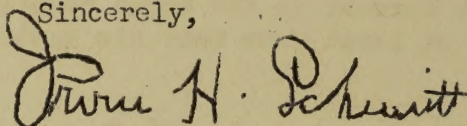
When Roberta Clark, of our staff, went to Pennsylvania recently for a 3-day field trip, her host was Paul Smith, assistant State supervisor. She and Paul spent one day seeing the cherry harvest day-hauls out of Gettysburg, and then visited Chester and Lancaster Counties for such activities as corn detasseling.

Roberta reports particular surprise at the great percentage of youth hauled by school busses in the Gettysburg area--about 95 percent. Most of the cherry growers are big ones and they've contracted with school bus drivers who own their own busses. One big grower served chocolate milk to his pickers each morning, hot coffee each noon hour, and iced tea in the afternoon--in addition to drinking water which made the rounds throughout the day.

The corn detasseling program she saw in Lancaster County was an especially good one, she says. A local school teacher is hired to supervise, and the foreman with the hybrid seed corn company know how to handle boy and girl workers.

Before this letter is processed and gets off to you, I shall be on my way to Maine, New Hampshire, and Connecticut to see day-haul activities for the next ten days.

Sincerely,



Irvin H. Schmitt, Chief  
Victory Farm Volunteers Division  
Extension Farm Labor Program

(Copy to State Supervisors,  
directors, editors)

